

CHOOSING A COLLEGE

ACADEMICS

More than anything else, you go to college to get an education. The type of academic atmosphere and variety of courses studied should be considered when choosing a school.

Examine the academic offerings of the school --- not just the slick brochures but the actual courses required for the major you choose. Insist on a course catalog even if you have to buy one.

SIZE

Colleges range in size from 150 to 50,000 students. Small schools offer you more personal involvement. Large schools tend to be more impersonal, allow you to be more anonymous. Size does make a difference.

COSTS

A major factor to be considered is the cost of attending a college. The total cost for a year, as computed by the college financial aid office, includes tuition, fees, room and board, books, supplies, transportation, and personal expenses. Total costs range from \$2,000 for a community college to \$37,000 for a private school.

Make sure the school gives you a clear statement of its tuition and fees. Remember that any financial aid you get will be applied first to paying the school's tuition and fees. If there's any money left over, the school will give it to you to help you pay for things such as food and rent.

LOCATION

There are many reasons why the location of the college may be important to you. You should always consider the expense of travel, the need for independence versus the desire to stay near your family and the effects of living in a particular climate.

The physical environment of the college you go to may be very important to you. Is the college in a large city, a "college town," or a rural area?